



## Private jail guard in court on drug rap

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A guard at a privately run jail for federal inmates made his first court appearance Monday on charges that he tried to smuggle heroin and cocaine into the lockup.

During an initial hearing, U.S. Magistrate Judge John Primomo ordered Juan Roberto Ortiz held pending a bail hearing on Thursday.

Before his arrest this weekend, Ortiz, 40, had worked at the Central Texas Parole Violators Facility across Nueva Street from the San Antonio Police Department since November 2003, according to Pablo Paez, spokesman for The Geo Group, the Florida-based company that runs the jail.

Ortiz has been placed on unpaid leave pending the conclusion of the investigation, Paez said.

Narcotics detectives with the San Antonio Police Department, assisted by the U.S. Marshals Service, had targeted Ortiz in a sting operation last week.

It culminated in his arrest Friday evening after Ortiz took what was purported to be 2 ounces of heroin and 2 ounces of cocaine from a confidential informant and agreed to smuggle the items into the jail, a criminal complaint affidavit stated.

The affidavit said Ortiz was paid \$1,200 and that the items, which contained substances that looked like the drugs, were found in the console of his truck.

Police have said real drugs are not used in the stings so they don't fall into the wrong hands.

A search of Ortiz's apartment yielded items used to cut and package the drugs, including balloons, lactose, and a coffee grinder with heroin residue, the affidavit said.

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